



The AYFS Bears' kick off squad breaking out of the huddle and prepping to send off the opening kick off of their semi-final match up against the Steelers this past Saturday. The Bears won 20-6 and have secured a spot in the championship game this Saturday. See story in today's sports section for details.

[photo: TG]

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# Fireman who assaulted a boy with scissors gets 20 months

DEFENDANT SAYS HE WAS ANGRY AND TOOK THE LAW INTO HIS OWN HANDS

by Ausage Fausia  
Samoa News Reporter

A 46-year-old fireman who was convicted of using a sharp weapon to cause head injuries to a 15-year-old boy was sentenced last week to 20 months and to pay restitution of \$5,000 to the victim as one of the conditions of his five-year probation.

Ropeti Muao was initially charged with felony first-degree assault, punishable by life in prison or at least 30 years in jail; but under a plea agreement with the government, Muao pled guilty to a lesser felony — second-degree assault — punishable by no more than 5 years imprisonment, or a fine of not more than \$5,000 or both.

During sentencing last Friday, Muao apologized to the court and asked for a chance to return home to care for his family, especially his elderly mother who relies on him financially.

He also apologized to the victim and his parents.

Muao told the court it was not his intention to cause injuries to the “young son” — the victim in this case — but he was unable to hold his anger after his niece reached out to him for help, and therefore he took matters into his own hands and assaulted the boy. Muao said he didn’t think his actions would send him to jail.

“The truth of the matter is, it took me a short period of time to commit this crime but the consequence was that I wasted so many days of my life in prison,” Muao said, adding that he’s truly remorseful for what he did and begged the panel of judges for another chance.

In his plea mitigation, Public Defender Douglas Fiaui told the court Muao did not cause life threatening injuries or serious injuries to the victim. He said despite the report that his client’s action created serious head trauma to the victim, the boy was a young boxer prior to the incident.

Fiaui argued that being a boxer comes with head problems

(Continued on page 8)

# UPDATE GITA: Major disaster declaration signals more federal assistance

by Fili Sagapolutele  
Samoa News Correspondent

American Samoa Government entities including semi autonomous agencies, that suffered damage from Tropical Storm Gita will not communicate their reports and costs directly to federal entities, but to the Governor’s Authorized Representative (GAR), according to policies set by Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga, whose request for a US President major disaster declaration following Gita was approved last Friday.

Lolo and the White House made separate announcements last Friday about US President Donald J. Trump approving a major disaster declaration for American Samoa, paving the way for federal assistance to the territory.

Federal assistance “can include” grants for temporary housing and home repairs, as well as funding to the government and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis, according to a White House news release, which also states that the federal assistance is to supplement territory recovery efforts in the areas affected by “Tropical Storm Gita from Feb. 7 to Feb. 12th”.

Gita left behind devastation on Tutuila on Feb. 9th, but on Feb. 7th and 8th, a monsoonal trough caused severe flooding, and closure of all public schools and many private schools. And as Gita moved away, the lingering effects of the storm as well as another weather system brought more strong winds and heavy rain for three-days.

According to the White House, the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will announce in the coming days the opening of the Disaster Recovery Center where residents and business owners who sustained losses due to the storm can begin applying for assistance.

Additionally, local government is planning an orderly process to assist all survivors and will provide details through community and media channels.

In announcing the major disaster declaration

approval, the governor said details of federal programs available under the declaration were to be made available at a later date by Lt. Gov. Lemanu Sialega Palepoi Mauga, who is also the GAR to FEMA for this disaster.

(See Samoa News online Saturday, Mar. 3 and Sunday, Mar. 4th for details.)

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

In a letter last Friday to his cabinet members, the governor outlined “disaster policies, protocols and procedures” for all to follow, saying it’s “imperative” that ASG entities are on the same page regarding information and numbers submitted to FEMA and other federal assistance agencies connected to the Gita disasters.

According to Lolo, all ASG entities including semi autonomous agencies will channel all damage assessment reports and claims to the GAR/Deputy GAR (who is Attorney General Talauega Eleasalo Ale) for review and verification prior to submission to the federal agencies.

“This means that direct contact with FEMA or other federal agencies is discouraged and would constitute violation of this policy,” the governor wrote. “The GAR/ Deputy GAR will determine your degree of involvement in any discussions with FEMA or other federal agencies.”

Lolo asked his cabinet members “to clearly and accurately articulate your needs” to the GAR/ Deputy GAR.

He explained that these activities would be conducted in close collaboration with the ASG Disaster Coordinating Officer — local Homeland Security director, Samana Semo Ve’ave’a — and the designated agencies to support the preparation of documents compliant with federal requirements.

Additionally, the GAR will communicate to FEMA that all payment of claims submitted by ASG entities will be transmitted to the general government for subsequent distribution through the ASG Treasury Department.

Furthermore, appropriate process and pro-

(Continued on page 7)







Frances McDormand, winner of the award for best performance by an actress in a leading role for “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri”, attends the Governors Ball after the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

(Photo by Eric Jamison/Invision/AP)



# COURT BRIEFS

by Ausage Fausia  
Samoa News Reporter

## METHODIST KUKA MIKA

The 24-year-old man who was arrested by police on Dec. 31, 2017 for violating local drug laws told the court that the allegations against him are true.

Methodist Kuka Mika was initially charged with unlawful possession of a controlled substance, to wit; methamphetamine, and marijuana — both class D felonies.

However, under a plea agreement with the government, Mika pled guilty to the meth charge and admits that on the night in question, he was in possession of a glass pipe that contained meth.

When asked by Chief Justice

Michael Kruse for details, Mika said the pipe belonged to him and he used it to smoke meth.

Mika remains in custody and is scheduled to appear for sentencing on April 20.

This is the second time police officers have arrested Mika for unlawful possession of illegal drugs.

In the first case, District Court Judge Fiti Sunia dismissed it after the court found no probable cause to bind the case over to High Court, after a preliminary examination on Oct. 22, 2017, found that a police search conducted during a traffic stop on Sept. 12, 2017 was unlawful, and violated the defendant’s constitutional rights under local laws.

In that incident, cops from the DPS Vice & Narcotics Unit who were conducting a traffic stop in the Iliili area pulled over a vehicle for having a loud muffler. There were two people inside the vehicle — the driver, identified as Sierra Isaia, and Mika, who was in the passenger seat. Illegal drugs were found on both suspects following a police search.

## VAITELE TAGO

Repeat offender Vaitele Tago was ordered by Acting Associate Justice Elvis P. Patea last Friday to serve out the remaining 8 months of a 20-month sentence from a 2016 case. The decision came after the court found Tago in violation of conditions of his 5-year probation sentence.

Tago was found guilty by District Court Judge Fiti Sunia last week of disturbing the public peace and subsequently sentenced to 152 days in jail — that was the amount of time he served while awaiting his sentence.

He appeared in High Court last Friday for a hearing after he failed to comply with conditions of his probation from a previous conviction.

Tago’s attorney, Public Defender Douglas Fiaui informed the court that Judge Sunia sentenced his client to time served, after he was convicted of disturbing the public

peace, and the remaining charges of third degree assault and resisting arrest were dismissed as part of a plea agreement with the government.

Instead of revoking his probation and ordering him to serve the remainder of his suspended 5-year jail term, Fiaui asked the court to modify the conditions of probation, to allow Tago to return home and continue to be a law-abiding citizen.

Although he was convicted of disturbing the public peace, Fiaui told the court there was no alcohol involved when police arrested his client.

Tago apologized to the court for his actions, and begged for another chance to go home. He told the court he would not violate any conditions of his probation in the future.

Prosecutor Christy Dunn agreed with the defense’s argument to modify conditions of Tago’s probation. But she emphasized the seriousness of the defendant’s actions, when he resisted as police were trying to arrest him.

Patea reminded Tago that one of the conditions of his 5-year probation the court handed down two years ago was that he serves 20 months at the TCF.

“The court then ordered you to serve only 12 months in jail, and the balance of 8 months was stayed, based on your good behavior,” Patea continued. “The court urges you to comply with all other conditions of your probation, including being a law-abiding citizen.”

Patea said Tago’s failure to comply with this condition is what brought him to court.

He said the court believes revoking Tago’s probation is not necessary at this time, and he will be given a chance to straighten out his life.

The court then modified the conditions of Tago’s probation, and ordered him to serve the stayed period of detention — which is 8 months.

“Tago, it is our hope that we will not see you in court next time for another Order to Show Cause because your chances are running out,” Patea concluded.

## Man arrested, accused of stealing McDormand’s Oscar trophy

By MICHAEL BALSAMO, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A man was arrested and is accused of stealing Frances McDormand’s Oscars trophy after the Academy Awards on Sunday night, Los Angeles police said.

Terry Bryant, 47, was arrested on suspicion of felony grand theft, said Officer Rosario Herrera, a police spokeswoman. Video captured by The

Associated Press appears to show Bryant walking with the statuette out of the Governors Ball, the Oscars after-party where police say he took it.

The video shows a man in a tuxedo who appears to be Bryant holding an Oscar statuette highly and proudly as an onlooker cheers.

“All right baby boys, and baby girls,” he says, walking

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FILE - In this July 13, 2016 file photo, Laurie Holt holds a photograph of her son Joshua Holt at her home, in Riverton, Utah. A secret backchannel has opened up in 2018, between normally hostile Venezuelan and U.S. officials to discuss the possible release of Joshua Holt, jailed for more than 20 months in the volatile South American nation, multiple congressional sources have told the AP.

(AP Photo/Rick Bowmer, File)

# US aides: Venezuela opens backchannel over jailed American

By JOSHUA GOODMAN, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro welcomed a visit by a top-ranking Republican congressional staffer last month to discuss the possible release of a Utah man jailed for more than 20 months in this volatile South American nation, six U.S. congressional and administration aides told The Associated Press.

It’s not known if there has been any progress in the back-channel talks to secure Joshua Holt’s freedom, but the mere fact that Maduro met with the staffer, and in turn sent an envoy of his own this week to Washington, may be a sign of movement in a case that has become a major irritant as tensions between the two countries rise.

The unannounced discussions began when Caleb McCarry, a Republican aide on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, traveled to Caracas in February and met with Maduro and first lady Cilia Flores to discuss Holt’s imprisonment, said the aides, who agreed to discuss the matter only if not quoted by name because the talks are sensitive.

They said McCarry, who has known Maduro for more than 15 years, made the unusual visit at the request of Sen. Orrin Hatch, a Republican from Utah. While in Caracas, McCarry visited Holt in jail, delivering him a letter from Hatch.

The Trump administration is said to be aware of McCarry’s lobbying, though there is no indication it has lent support to the effort. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert declined to comment Monday when asked about the informal talks, saying only: “We are disappointed Mr. Holt has still not been released on humanitarian grounds.”

The behind-the-scenes dialogue prompted a surprise visit this week to Washington by a trusted ally of Maduro, Gov. Rafael Lacava of Carabobo state, to discuss Holt, three congressional aides familiar with the visit said.

Holt, 25, traveled to Caracas in June 2016 to marry a fellow

(Continued on page 11)

# DOC to implement new business classification system

by Fili Sagapolutele  
Samoa News Correspondent

In about two weeks, the Commerce Department plans to implement a new standard classification when classifying local businesses in the American Samoa Business Registry (ASBR), which lists all registered businesses operating in the territory in accordance to the economic activity they perform.

DOC announced last Wednesday plans to implement the American Samoa Industrial Classification 2017 (ASIC 2017), which is the territory’s national classification of all productive activities currently being undertaken in the territory.

Responding to Samoa News inquiries, Commerce director Keniseli Lafaele explained that an industrial classification system is a necessary tool to begin collecting and analyzing industry-specific data.

“Once the territory is able to disaggregate businesses into explicitly defined industry classes, trends can be identified that are unique to specific industries,” said Lafaele adding that the ASIC 2017 will be implemented in two weeks.

“Additionally, certain financing programs are specific to industry. Using the ASIC 2017 to break current businesses into industries could open the door to these kinds of opportunities,” he pointed out.

DOC said in a news release that the ASIC 2017 is a subset of the Pacific Standard Industrial Classification 2014 (or PACSIC 2014) and thus follows a set of internationally agreed concepts, definitions, principles for use in the collection and reporting of statistics according to their economic designation.

Asked if ASIC helps with data provided to federal entities such as the US Labor Department, Lafaele said that while federal government agencies use the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), the ASIC 2017 is based on almost the exact same subdivisions of industries, with only a few notable exceptions.

“Specifically, we include additional categories in some of the agricultural sectors, in order to account for businesses that specialize in crops that are unique to the South Pacific region - such as ulu,” he said. “This classification system is expected to be a valuable tool for federal economic data partners, though.”

He explained that previous efforts by federal

agencies, and by ASG, to identify employment, income, and other economic data by sector “has been a labor-intensive process.”

“A full implementation of ASIC 2017 is expected to streamline future efforts to collect similar economic data,” Lafaele explained.

According to the DOC, the ASIC 2017 will be used for classifying data in fields of economic and social statistics, such as for statistics on national accounts, demography of enterprises, and the number of people engaged.

It will also “be used for non-statistical purposes such as in tax collection and issuing of business licenses. ASIC 2017 also includes guidance on data reporting on the informal sector and imputed rental services of owner-occupied dwellings as an analytical tool.”

When asked for clarification, Lafaele explained that the informal sector is an umbrella term used to cover all miscellaneous sources of revenue and/or employment.

“They are typically characterized as being small-production operations, having little-to-no division between labor and capital as a means of production, with the primary objective of providing employment and income for the owner/operator,” he said.

For example, he said, this could include things such as small-scale farming, handyman services, and owner/operator taxis, especially if such services operate outside of government regulation and taxation - whether legally or illegally.

As for “imputed rent of an owner-occupied home,” he said it’s the amount that a home owner might be willing to pay in rent for that home, if he or she was a renter instead of the owner.

“It is, essentially, a measure of value that home ownership contributes to the broader economy. This can be a tricky value to include within the framework of an industrial classification system,” he explained. “For ASIC 2017, our guidance is to define it as a real-estate activity in the informal sector.”

Besides listing all businesses operating in the territory, DOC said the ASBR also provides a range of scoping and sizing information about each business, which allows surveys to stratify and scope frames for use in conducting surveys across a range of subject matters.

For more information on ASBR and ASIC 2017 contact the DOC Statistics Division at 633-5155 or online: <www.doc.as>

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# Scientists to advise on management of US Pacific Island fisheries

HONOLULU — 5 March 2018 — Scientists from throughout the Pacific will convene in Honolulu Tuesday through Thursday to provide recommendations on managing fisheries in Hawai’i, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the US Pacific Remote Islands Areas. The meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council’s Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) is open to the public and runs 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Council office, 1164 Bishop St., Suite 1400.

Recommendations from the SSC and the Council’s other advisory bodies will be considered by the Council at its 172nd meeting to be held March 14-17 at the Laniakea YWCA, Fuller Hall, 1040 Richards St., Honolulu. The Council is expected to take action on nine items, including the following five actions that are being reviewed by the SSC.

### AMERICAN SAMOA LARGE VESSEL PROHIBITED AREA

In 2002, the Large Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA) was established to separate the large (greater than 50 feet) and small longline vessels to prevent potential gear conflict and catch competition. Subsequently, the fleet of small alia longline vessels dwindled from 40 down to one. About 15 larger longline vessels continue to operate out of Pago Pago Harbor under severe economic stress. Consideration will be given to LVPA options that may improve economic efficiency of the larger longline vessels while taking into consideration, among other things, the need to prevent over-fishing, impacts on small vessels and protecting American Samoa cultural fishing practices.

### AMERICAN SAMOA SWORDFISH TRIP LIMIT

In 2009, the Council recommended Amendment 5 to the Pelagic FEP to require gear modifications in the American Samoa longline fishery to require hooks to be set below 100 meters in depth in order to minimize the incidental catch of green sea turtles. NMFS implemented this measure in 2011. Amendment 5 also limited swordfish per trip to 10, which mirrored Hawaii longline regulations. Poor economic conditions have persisted in the American Samoa longline fishery for several years due to reduced albacore catch rates, high operating costs and relatively low fish prices. Consideration is thus being given to modify or remove the limit on the maximum number of swordfish that can be landed on a per trip basis by vessels holding an American Samoa limited entry longline permit that operate south of the Equator. The intent of the proposed action is to optimize fishery resources by reducing regulatory discards of swordfish and increase efficiency of the fishery while maintaining safeguards for sea turtles and other protected species.

### US TERRITORY LONGLINE BIGEYE CATCH LIMIT SPECIFICATION

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) develops and agrees on conservation and management measures for highly migratory species caught by WCPFC members and Participating Territories in the Western and Central Pacific Official. In December 2017, the WCPFC agreed to a measure that restores the longline bigeye limits of six countries to 2016 levels, including the United States (3,554 mt). The measure does not establish an individual limit on the amount of bigeye tuna that may be harvested annually in the Convention Area by Small Island Developing States and Participating Territories, including American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI. The SSC and Council will consider a federal measure that limits the bigeye longline catch of the US Territories and the amount of catch they could transfer under Specified Fishing Arrangements to vessels permitted under the Pelagic FEP.

### ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS SPECIES CLASSIFICATION

A proposed amendment to the Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs) for the Hawai’i, American Samoa and Mariana Archipelagos would reclassify hundreds of species that are not readily caught by fishermen as ecosystem component species. Currently these species are classified as “species in need of federal management and conservation,” which requires stock assessments, annual catch limits and other actions from which “ecosystem component species” are exempt. The ecosystem component species would remain in the FEPs and would continue to be monitored by the Council.

### SEA TURTLE INTERACTIONS IN THE HAWAI’I SHALLOW-SET LONG-LINE FISHERY

The Council will consider options for developing a framework for managing loggerhead and leatherback turtle interactions in the Hawaii shallow-set longline fishery. The management framework would provide responsive measures to help ensure year-round operations while addressing the needs for protected species conservation. Among these possible measures are a) specification of hard caps; b) a temporary in-season closure when a certain proportion of the loggerhead or leatherback limit is reached; c) real-time spatial management measures to monitor and respond to interaction hotspots and fluctuations; and d) a fleet communication program to facilitate real-time spatial management measures and disseminate interaction information to the fleet.

For the complete SSC and Council meeting agendas and associated documents, go to [www.wpcouncil.org/category/upcoming-council-and-advisory-body-meetings/](http://www.wpcouncil.org/category/upcoming-council-and-advisory-body-meetings/) or email [info@wpcouncil.org](mailto:info@wpcouncil.org) or phone (808) 522-8220.

## In Texas GOP primary, it’s who can love Trump the most

By PAUL J. WEBER, Associated Press

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas (AP) — George P. Bush’s campaign flyers in Texas declare that he’s “standing beside our president” — the one who called his dad, Jeb, an embarrassment to his family and a pathetic person.

At a political forum outside San Antonio, another Republican candidate brags about his “bigly” wins over Democrats. Another hopeful in Houston, just days after a mass shooting at a Florida high school killed 17 people, sent voters a photo of herself holding an assault rifle — below the words “Kathaleen Wall stands with Trump.” Texas holds the nation’s first 2018 primary elections Tuesday, and the campaign is providing a vivid exhibition of the Trump effect in GOP politics. Some races are playing out in a roadshow of one-upping emulation of the combative president, in which there’s no such thing as cozying up too close or too ardently, regardless of his rough edges or low approval ratings nationwide. “I’m Robert Stovall, and like President Trump, I realize the swamp is the problem,” begins a campaign ad for Stovall, a San Antonio Republican Party leader now running for Congress. He stands in a literal swamp wearing a “Make America Great Again” hat and cocks a shotgun at the end. It’s like nothing seen before in Texas politics, even when a Texan was in the White House. Love of George W. Bush’s style of big government conservatism wasn’t a staple of campaigns here. A decade later, his nephew George P. Bush, the Texas land commissioner, is thanking President Donald Trump’s son Donald Trump Jr. for endorsing him in his bid for re-election.

Texas candidates aren’t alone in courting Trump diehards who make up the GOP base — and who can be counted on to show up in typically low-turnout primary elections. Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette, who is running for governor, has trumpeted Trump’s endorsement, while an outside group accuses his GOP rival of “abandoning” the president. In Indiana, three Republicans running for Senate are all portraying themselves as his most steadfast ally.

The impression of a Trump White House at war with its enemies is stoking the atmosphere. “It’s about he’s our Republican president and if we don’t stand together and we don’t defend the party and conservative ideas, no one is,” said Brendan Steinhauser, an Austin-based Republican strategist. A Quinnipiac University survey in late February put Trump’s approval rating at 86 percent among Republicans but just 37 percent overall. As Republicans brace for a difficult election this November — the president’s party typically loses congressional seats in the midterm cycle — they could not have asked for a gentler warm-up than Texas, where the GOP holds such a commanding edge that most election-year drama dissolves once the primaries are done. Democrats haven’t won a statewide race since 1994 and are not seen as favored to flip any of six congressional seats opened up by GOP retirements on Capitol Hill. Among those leaving is U.S. Rep. Lamar Smith, who in January lauded Trump’s physical fitness and said Americans were better off getting their news straight from Trump than from the media. Some of the 18 Republicans trying to replace him don’t stop there: Outsider candidate Mauro Garza says he is running because “Donald Trump said I could be here.” Chip Roy, a former top aide to Republican U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, opens rallies by rhetorically asking how much better citizens’ lives were a year into a Trump presidency.



In this Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018, photo, campaign T-shirts are stacked on a table at a Republican congressional candidate forum, in New Braunfels, Texas. Texas holds the nation’s first 2018 primary elections Tuesday, March 6, 2018, and the campaign is providing a vivid exhibition of the Trump effect in GOP politics.

(AP Photo/Eric Gay)





Applications are being accepted through March 15th for the 2018 US Pacific Territories Capacity-Building Scholarships, sponsored by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (WPRFMC). The scholarship pays for college expenses to complete a fishery science related undergraduate or graduate degree at universities in Guam and Hawaii. Applicants must have completed or be in the process of completing their sophomore year in college and be a US citizen or national with strong ties to American Samoa, Guam or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).  
You can download an application at the Samoa News website or contact the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council at (808) 522-5341 or at [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov). Pictured is 2015 scholarship recipient Faasalafa Kitiona (right) who is now employed at the America Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources under Director Henry Sesapasara (left). [courtesy photo]

# Prosecutors want to paint Cosby as big Hollywood predator

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Stung by a hung jury the first time around, prosecutors are pushing to widen the scope of Bill Cosby’s looming retrial to spotlight allegations he is one of the biggest serial predators in a Hollywood suddenly aware of sexual misconduct in the #MeToo era.

The 80-year-old Cosby will be back in a suburban Philadelphia courtroom on Tuesday as his lawyers try to convince a judge to block some of his dozens of accusers from testifying against him at his April 2 retrial.

Prosecutors want as many as 19 of Cosby’s accusers to take the stand as they attempt to show the comedian had a long history of drugging and attacking women. They also are trying to insulate the accuser in his lone criminal case, Andrea Constand, from what a prosecutor called the defense’s “inevitable attacks” on her credibility.

Cosby’s lawyers have argued in writing that some of the aspiring actresses, flight attendants and other women the prosecution wants to call have allegations dating to the 1960s that are impossible to defend against. Some witnesses are dead, memories are shot and evidence has been lost, the law-

(Continued on page 12)



# Tropical Cyclone Gita SPECIAL

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**PM TUILAEPa SAYS CHINA AID IS ‘ALL TRANSPARENT’**

Prime Minister Tuilaepa Dr. Sa’ilele Malielegaoi has defended China’s aid amidst growing concerns from the Pacific region’s traditional development partners.

Tuilaepa went in to bat for China during a joint press conference with New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, in his office yesterday.

Tuilaepa said China’s aid is all out in the open and that there are no hidden agendas. He said China has earmarked for the next five years US\$2 billion (T\$4.8 billion) for grants to Pacific Islands and US\$2 billion (T\$4.8 billion) for soft loans.

Tuilaepa reminded that many critics forget the periodical consultations with “our donors including the United States, Japan and China.”

He recalled that during the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Prime Minister of India, all the Pacific leaders were invited.

“President Xi laid out (all their plans) to all the countries including Australia and New Zealand that have diplomatic relations with China,” the PM said.

“They did not include countries that had relations with Taiwan. It was in that meeting that those who were there, to hear the message from the president from China that they

had earmarked for the next five years US\$2billion for grants and US\$2billion for soft loans.”

“And it’s all transparent. So what we are doing is a follow-up on the undertakings, which are done in the open nothing was hidden. Refer back two years, you will find out.”

Tuilaepa said Samoa is only interested in what was promised to them.

He was also asked to divulge how much is owed to the Chinese Government. “I was asked this question by the local media, and I cannot give it as I am not the Minister of Finance,” the prime minister said.

“With our debt capacity payment this year, the priority is in our budget, which is why we label it under the budget statutory payout.”

“We first deduct the payments for our debts because in the debts you’ll find, the dignity of the leaders of this country infused in the debts.”

“We should never fail in our debts obligations. After meeting that debt liability what is left is to meet the current expenditure to ensure that the government never stops.”

“You know in America, sometimes they close down shop because they run out of money.”

“But here we make damn sure that the government is never short and after deducting and meeting our debts, we still have monies to ensure our ongoing obligations works smoothly.”

“And we still have a huge balance of over a \$100million

to pay for our developments because it is very important in developing your budget expenditures every year.”

“You must always have enough to develop because with development expenditures your G.D.P. is sure to go up and not down.”

(Source: Samoa Observer)

**COURT PRESIDENT TAKES ‘SPECIAL LEAVE’**

The President of the Land and Titles Court, Fepulea’i Attila Ropati, has taken “special leave pending criminal charges” filed against him in the Court.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration (M.J.C.A.), Papali’i John Taimalelagi confirmed this.

The President is accused of assaulting a Security Officer of the M.J.C.A. during a function towards the end of the last year. The Police have charged him with assault, being armed with a dangerous weapon and causing injury.

According to Papali’i, Fepulea’i’s “special leave” became effective last Friday.

“The Chief Justice, his Honor Patu Tiavasu’e Falefatu Sapolu and the Judicial Service Commission accepted the request by the honorable President to take personal leave, pending the criminal case against him,” said Papali’i.

In his absence, the Chief Justice, His Honor Patu has taken over the role of the President of Land and Titles.

“The Chief Justice will play his role in the criminal, civil cases and will also sit on the Land and Titles cases,” Papali’i said.

He noted that the added responsibility will be a burden to the Chief Justice but he will make the determination on which cases to pass to other Judges and Justices.

Papali’i denied that the Fepulea’i’s absence would affect the work of the Land and Titles Court. “There is no impact on the cases scheduled before Fepulea’i,” he said. “The Court cases will proceed as scheduled.”

According to Papali’i, Fepulea’i has heard more than 300 cases since his appointment in August 2016. “I am speaking as a Registrar of the Court; Fepulea’i is an asset to the Land and Titles Court and the Ministry of Justice.

“It is unfortunate what has occurred, however the appointment of Fepulea’i couldn’t have come at a better time.

“There were significant changes that occurred under his tenure as President of the Land and Titles Court.

“Regarding decisions on

request from members of the public on various issues specifically for Lands and Titles, Fepulea’i did not shy away from making hard decisions.

“He also played a huge role in making the necessary changes for easier processes for the convenience of the public, within the Land and Titles Court of first instance, Leave to Appeal Court and the Court of Appeal.”

Since he was charged, the President has been remanded at liberty until his Court appearance on 13 March 2018.

Police Superintendent and Media Spokesperson, Auapa’au Logoitino Filipino confirmed this.

According to sources within the Police, the alleged incident occurred at the compound of the Judiciary during a “party” for the Judges. “It’s alleged that the accused struck the security officer (who works at the judiciary compound) on the head twice with a glass bottle,” the source said.

“The matter was not reported to the Police immediately and it wasn’t until a few days later when the security officer felt pain on his head and was taken to the hospital.”

“At the hospital, the doctor found bits and pieces of broken glass on his head and that’s when the matter was reported to the Police.”

Efforts by the Samoa Observer to get a comment from Fepulea’i directly have been unsuccessful.

(Source: Samoa Observer)

**MAN STABS ESTRANGED WIFE NINE TIMES, PLEADS GUILTY**

The man who stabbed his estranged wife nine times in the neck in front of the National Bank Building of Samoa at the beginning of the year appeared in Court yesterday.

Thirty-three-year-old Petaia Swerling, of Tufuiopa, is set to be sentenced on 19 April 2018.

Refusing the offer to have a lawyer represent him, Swerling pleaded guilty to the charges. He appeared before the Chief Justice, His Honor Patu Tiava’asue Falefatu Sapolu.

Swerling is facing charges of being armed with a dangerous weapon, causing grievous bodily harm and attempted murder.

Yesterday, he was asked by Chief Justice Patu whether he wanted a lawyer given the seriousness of the charges against him.

“I don’t want a lawyer your honor,” he said, “I am ready to respond to the charges against me.” That’s when he pleaded guilty.

“The Court has noted down your guilty plea to all the charges against you and you do not want a lawyer to represent you,” His Honor Patu said.

“Therefore, this matter will be adjourned until Monday 19th April, 2018 to wait for a presentence report as well as the decision by the court.”

“It will be called before Justice Vui Clarence Nelson and you will still be remanded in custody until this date.”

According to the police summary of facts, the incident happened on 12 January 2018 in Apia.

The Police claim that he attempted to murder Bernadette Loia, a female of Tufuiopa and Salelologa.

“He was armed with a dangerous weapon namely a cooking knife and he had caused grievous bodily harm to the said female.”

The accused had stabbed his wife before running away and attempted to self-harm. An eyewitness said the man came out of nowhere and started stabbing her multiple times in public.

“The victim is an employee for one of the government ministries housed at the A.C.C. Building,” one eyewitness said.

“He was waiting for the victim to come to work because it was around 8’oclock in the morning that the incident occurred.”

When members of the public rushed to her rescue, he ran away.

“He ran towards the Mulivai Bridge because a taxi driver was chasing after him. He jumped into the sea and he went inside a pipe that is under there.”

“However, when he decided to come back out, the knife that he used on his partner was in his chest.

“The Police arrived at the scene and the ambulance was called. They were both taken to the hospital and they underwent operation.”

(Source: Samoa Observer)

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# West Virginia legislators eye measures to end teacher strike



Senate Majority Leader Ryan Ferns said his chamber’s leadership was offering “a compromise position.” He noted it was only preliminary. Details were not disclosed publicly. The committee planned to meet again Tuesday morning.

“Our position’s not as much about the amount of the pay raise but just how it’s paid for,” Ferns said.

Senate Finance Chairman Craig Blair, R-Berkeley, and Ferns, R-Ohio, said earlier that they remained skeptical that revised, higher revenue figures from Gov. Jim Justice to support the higher pay raises were legitimate. Blair suggested that schools reopen while the Legislature tries to work on the bills, prompting groans from the audience.

Ghent Elementary second-grade teacher April Smith attended the meeting and was disheartened.

“I don’t see them coming to an agreement, especially to satisfy everyone,” she said.

The committee’s initial inaction prompted schools statewide to close again Tuesday, the ninth day of canceled classes.

The Capitol was closed Monday after 5,000 people entered, posing security concerns. It was reopened an hour later, and teachers vented their frustration over the lack of progress. Their strike, in one of the poorest states in the country, has disrupted the education system’s 277,000 students and 35,000 employees, forcing working parents to scramble for child care. And children who rely on meals at school were at risk of going hungry.

In a state with a 17.9 percent poverty rate, teachers, bus drivers and other volunteers are collecting food for students who rely on free breakfasts. Teachers shared stories of time, money or food. At the end of the day, now we’re forced to be able to figure out how to care for our own families.”

we are helping them,” said Ann Osburn, a special education teacher at Buckhannon Academy. “I think we’re reaching as many as we can.”

Rachel Stringer, as a stay-at-home mom from Cross Lanes, said her biggest challenge has been making sure her children don’t forget what they’ve learned this school year. Despite the long layoff, Stringer supports the teachers.

“They deserve to be paid,” she said. “They deserve to be able to have insurance.”

Many teachers said they’d rather be in the classroom but believe they’ve come too far to back down.

“We feel like we’re under attack constantly,” said Cody Thompson, a social studies and civics teacher at Elkins High School. “Eventually, whenever you’re pushed into a corner, you’ve got to push back.”

The teacher walkout over pay and benefits shuttered classrooms Feb. 22. Since then, angry teachers have gone to the Capitol to press legislators to raise their pay after four years without an increase.

The walkout began after Justice signed a 2 percent pay raise for next year. After an initial round of protests, the House of Delegates later approved a 5 percent increase.

Then on Saturday, the state Senate approved a 4 percent raise, prompting angry union leaders to vow to stay out indefinitely. The House wouldn’t agree to the Senate’s move, sending the bill to the conference committee.

To make ends meet for themselves, many of these teachers have side jobs.

Kristie Skidmore, an elementary school reading specialist, has a clothing shop at her home.

“You’re looking at people here who every day care about other people, other families. People’s kids,” Skidmore said. “But at the end of the day, now we’re forced to be able to figure out how to care for our own families.”

Vanessa Brown, a teacher from Cledenin W.Va., holds a sign with her hat as she waits to get into a teacher rally Monday, March 5, 2018, at the West Virginia Capitol in Charleston, W.Va. Hundreds of teachers from 55 counties are on strike for pay raises and better health benefits.

(AP Photo/Tyler Evert)

By JOHN RABY and MICHAEL VIR-TANEN, Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — West Virginia legislators plan to meet Tuesday to weigh some possible compromise aimed at ending the strike by West Virginia teachers now entering its

who failed to agree on a 5 percent pay raise that would end the strike, forcing districts to continue to cancel Tuesday classes. The governor, union leaders and the House of Delegates agreed to the pay raise for the teachers, among the lowest paid in the nation, but the Senate offered

## Update...

Continued from page 1

cedures will be prepared and issued by Treasury to ensure that funds paid on damages will be promptly repatriated to the relevant department, office or authority.

Insurance Commissioner, Peter Fuimaono “will work closely with the GAR on our insurance claims,” said Lolo, adding that the “same policy is applied on the transmittal of damage assessment reports to prepare our overall government insurance claim to be sent to our insurer.”

### KEY FEDERAL DISASTER AID PROGRAMS

In a fact-sheet released last Friday, FEMA provided a summary of key federal disaster aid programs that can be made available as needed and warranted under Trump’s disaster declaration issued for the territory.

Rental payments Assistance for affected individuals and families can include as required, rental payments for temporary housing for those whose homes are unlivable. Initial assistance may be provided for up to three months for homeowners and at least one month for renters. This program is fully funded and administered by FEMA.

Repairs Not Covered by Insurance Possible grant funding for

home repairs and replacement of essential household items not covered by insurance to make damaged dwellings safe, sanitary and functional. FEMA funds and administers this program.

Unemployment Payments FEMA also funds and ASG administers, a program in which unemployment payments up to 26 weeks for workers who temporarily lost jobs because of the disaster and who do not qualify for territory benefits, such as self-employed individuals.

OTHER ASSISTANCE Grant funding to replace personal property and help meet medical, dental, funeral, transportation and other serious disaster-related needs not covered by insurance or other federal, territory and charitable aid programs. For this program, FEMA funds 75% of total eligible costs with 25% by American Samoa.

US Small Business Administration Programs

There are low-interest loans to cover residential losses not fully compensated by insurance; another program, provides loans up to \$2 million for small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives and most private, non-profit organizations of all sizes that have suffered disaster-related cash flow problems and need funds for working capital

to recover from the disaster’s adverse economic impact

Assistance to the American Samoa Government includes debris removal and emergency protective measures to save lives and protect property. The federal government pays not less than 75% of the eligible costs while ASG is responsible for the balance.

### RED CROSS

American Red Cross says they are continuing to provide casework assistance based on ASG’s Damage Assessment List, which is the original list given to them. Additionally, Red Cross continues to contact households on the ASG Damage Assessment list, and schedule appointment based casework sessions with families Red Cross has not met with yet.

ASG’s original list is based on the first joint disaster assessment carried out the week of Feb. 12th by the local government and its federal partners.

The second assessment — conducted only by ASG — began last week and was scheduled to end by no later than yesterday, Monday, Mar. 5, as noted in an ASDHS Special Bulletin, dated Sunday, Mar. 4 — and this assessment was to cover all villages on Tutuila, Aunu’u and Manu’a.



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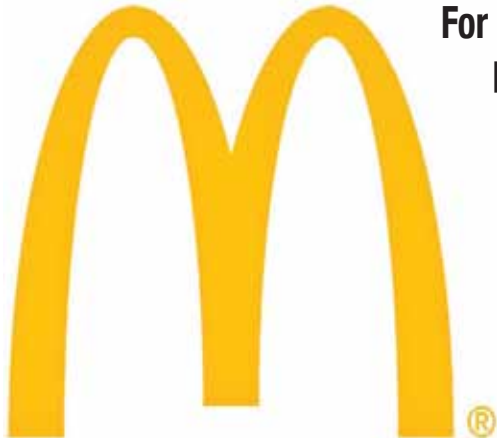
President of the Miss American Samoa Incorporated (MASI) Mrs. Meafou Imo with her sister in law, Ofeira during a special ceremony held this past Saturday to thank everyone for their support of the recently crowned Miss Pacific Islands and also the 2017-2018 Miss American Samoa, Matau-aina Toomalatai.

[photo: Blue Chen-Fruean]

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### Fireman...

Continued from page 1

and he believes this is one of the contributing factors to the victim's head trauma, as stated in the pre-sentence report.

He said the incident, which resulted in Muao assaulting the victim, came about after the victim harassed Muao's niece.

The defense attorney asked the court to give Muao a probated sentence without further detention, adding that the 10 months his client has spent in jail has taught him a valuable lesson.

Assistant Attorney General Woodrow Pengelly said the defendant's anger that day changed everything in his life, when he used a sharp object — a pair of scissors — to cause serious injuries to the victim's head, which required stitches.

As a member of the DPS Fire Division, Pengelly said the defendant should've known better, when his niece reached out to him for help. He reminded the court that anger is not an excuse and the defendant must be punished for his crime.

Chief Justice Michael Kruse did not accept Muao's statement regarding the reason behind the assault.

"He was angered after his niece was offended by the victim's actions, and using a sharp object to cause injuries to the victim's head is a very serious action," Kruse said.

He added that the injuries the victim suffered from the

incident are the only injuries the court's decision will be based on. The court took into consideration the defense argument that head problems the victim is facing could be a result of being a boxer.

"The court wants the defendant to understand that he is convicted of causing injuries to the victim's head, after he struck him with a sharp object. The court never took into account this mitigating factor, that anger was the main reason for the defendant to commit this crime," Kruse said.

Muao was then sentenced to 5 years, and a fine of \$5,000

Execution of the sentence is suspended and Muao is placed on probation for 5 years, under certain conditions that include serving 20 months at the TCF, and paying a restitution of \$5,000

The first payment of \$1,022.58 shall be paid to the Clerk of the Court, who will forward the payment to the LBJ Hospital to cover the victim's medical bills during the time he was admitted because of the injuries he sustained from the defendant's actions.

The remaining balance shall be paid to the Clerk, and will not be released to the victim until he turns 18.

Other conditions of probation include the order that Muao shall not be given Trustee status at TCF.

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# North Korean dictator, Seoul envoys have ‘open-hearted talk’



South Korea's national security director Chung Eui-yong, front, walks to board an aircraft as he leaves for Pyongyang at a military airport in Seongnam, south of Seoul, Monday, March 5, 2018. A group of high-level South Korean officials has left for North Korea for talks on North Korea's nuclear program and ways to help resume talks between Pyongyang and Washington.

(Jung Yeon-je/Pool Photo via AP)

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had an “openhearted talk” in Pyongyang with envoys for South Korean President Moon Jae-in, the North said Tuesday.

It's the first time South Korean officials have met with the young North Korean leader in person since he took power after his dictator father's death in late 2011 — and the latest sign that the Koreas are trying to mend ties after a year of

repeated North Korean weapons tests and threats of nuclear war.

North Korea's state media said Kim expressed his desire to “write a new history of national reunification” during a dinner Monday night that Seoul said lasted about four hours.

Given the robust history of bloodshed, threats and animosity on the Korean Peninsula, there is considerable skepticism over whether the Koreas' apparent warming relations will lead to lasting peace.

North Korea, some believe, is trying to use improved ties

with the South to weaken U.S.-led international sanctions and pressure, and to provide domestic propaganda fodder for Kim Jong Un.

But each new development also raises the possibility that the rivals can use the momentum from the good feelings created during North Korea's participation in the South's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics last month to ease a standoff over North Korea's nuclear ambitions and restart talks between Pyongyang and Washington.

The North Korean report sought to make Kim look statesmanlike as he welcomed the visiting South Koreans, with Kim offering views on “activating the versatile dialogue, contact, cooperation and exchange.”

He was also said to have given “important instruction to the relevant field to rapidly take practical steps for” a summit with Moon, which the North proposed last month.

Moon, a liberal who is keen to engage the North, likely wants to visit Pyongyang. But he must first broker better ties between the North and Washington, which is Seoul's top ally and its military protector.

The role of a confident leader welcoming visiting, and lower-ranking, officials from the rival South is one Kim clearly relishes. Smiling for cameras, he posed with the South Koreans and presided over what was described as a “co-patriotic and sincere atmosphere.”

Many in Seoul and Washington will want to know if, the rhetoric and smiling images notwithstanding, there's any possibility Kim will negotiate over the North's breakneck pursuit of an arsenal of nuclear missiles that can viably target the U.S. mainland.

The North has repeatedly and bluntly declared it will not give up its nuclear bombs. It also hates the annual U.S.-South Korean military exercises that were postponed because of the Olympics but will likely happen later this spring. And achieving its nuclear aims rests on the North resuming tests of missiles and bombs that set the region on edge.

Photos distributed by the North showed a beaming Kim dressed in a dark Mao-style suit and holding hands with Moon's national security director, Chung Eui-yong, the leader of the 10-member South Korean delegation. Chung's trip is the first known high-level visit by South Korean officials to the North in about a decade.

The South Korean delegates have another meeting with North Korean officials on Tuesday before returning home, but it's unclear if Kim Jong Un will be there.

Kim was said to have expressed at the dinner his “firm will to vigorously advance the north-south relations and write a new history of national reunification by the concerted efforts of our nation to be proud of in the world.”

There is speculation that better inter-Korean ties could pave the way for Washington and Pyongyang to talk about the North's nuclear weapons. The United States, however, has made clear that it doesn't want empty talks and that all options, including military measures, are on the table.

Previous warming ties between the Koreas have come to nothing amid North Korea's repeated weapons tests and the North's claims that the annual U.S.-South Korean war games are a rehearsal for an invasion.

Before leaving for Pyongyang, Chung said he would relay Moon's hopes for North Korean nuclear disarmament and a permanent peace on the peninsula.

Chung's delegation includes intelligence chief Suh Hoon and Vice Unification Minister Chun Hae-sung. The South Korean presidential Blue House said the high-profile delegation is meant to reciprocate the Olympic trip by Kim Jong Un's sister, Kim Yo Jong, who became the first member of the North's ruling family to come to South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Kim Yo Jong, who also attended Monday's dinner, and other senior North Korean officials met with Moon during the Olympics, conveyed Kim Jong Un's invitation to visit Pyongyang and expressed their willingness to hold talks with the United States.

After the Pyongyang trip, Chung's delegation is scheduled to fly to the United States to brief officials about the outcome of the talks with North Korean officials.

President Donald Trump has said talks with North Korea will happen only “under the right conditions.”

If Moon accepts Kim's invitation to visit Pyongyang it would be the third inter-Korean summit talk. The past two summits, one in 2000 and the other in 2007, were held between Kim's late father, Kim Jong Il, and two liberal South Korean presidents. They resulted in a series of cooperative projects between the Koreas that were scuttled during subsequent conservative administrations in the South.

## Man arrested...

Continued from page 2

quickly and nearly bumping into a woman.

He then quickly glances around him before walking out of frame, prominently holding the Oscar the entire time.

Another photographer who took Bryant's picture at about the same time did not recognize him as a winner at the ceremony, and began following him, police said.

When he was confronted, Bryant handed back the statuette without a fight, police said.

He was detained by security guards at the event and arrested by Los Angeles police officers. The award was later returned to McDormand.

“After some brief time apart, Frances and her Oscar were happily reunited. They celebrated the reunion with a double cheeseburger from In-N-Out Burger,” McDormand's publicist, Simon Halls, told the AP.

McDormand received the Academy Award for Best Actress for her performance in “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri.”

The two-time Oscar winner, who swept trophies at the Golden Globes, Screen Actors Guild, Independent Spirit and BAFTA ceremonies, beat out Sally Hawkins of “The Shape of Water,” Margot Robbie of “I, Tonya,” Saoirse Ronan of “Lady Bird,” and 21-time nominee Meryl Streep of “The Post” at Sunday's Oscars.

In “Three Billboards,” McDormand played Mildred Hayes, a hardened woman seeking justice for her daughter's murder in the crime drama. Her first Oscar came for the 1996 film “Fargo,” directed by her husband Joel Coen.

Bryant was being held on \$20,000 bail Monday, police said.

There was no immediate reply to a message sent to one of Bryant's social media profiles and it wasn't clear if had an attorney who could comment on his behalf.

A video that posted live on a Facebook page that appeared to belong to Bryant showed him kissing and flaunting a statuette during the Governor's Ball.

“Look it, baby. My team got this tonight. This is mine,” he said, turning the trophy toward the camera, before kissing it on the head.

As he spun around in a circle, Bryant solicited congratulations from those around him.

“Who wants to wish me congratulations?” he asked fellow revelers who were walking by, before posing for several selfies.

“You know what, I can't believe I got this.”

No one named Terry Bryant won an Oscar on Sunday.



# MegaBugs

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# Roles reduced, Kushner and Ivanka Trump's fate uncertain

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — They spent their first year in Washington as an untouchable White House power couple, commanding expansive portfolios, outlasting rivals and enjoying unmatched access to the president. But Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump have undergone a swift and stunning reckoning of late, their powers restricted, their enemies emboldened and their future in the West Wing uncertain.

Kushner, long the second-most powerful man in the West Wing, is under siege. President Donald Trump's son-in-law has lost influential White House allies. He remains under the shadow of the Russia probe and has seen his business dealings come under renewed scrutiny. He has been stripped of his top security clearance, raising questions how he can successfully advance his ambitious agenda — including achieving Mideast peace, a goal that has eluded presidents for generations.

Kushner's most powerful patron, the president himself, has wavered recently on whether his daughter and son-in-law belong in the White House anymore.

A frustrated Trump has

gripped about the wave of bad headlines generated by probes into Kushner's business dealings and the status of his security clearance, according to two people familiar with the president's thinking but not authorized to publicly discuss private conversations. The president also has wondered aloud if the couple would be better off returning home to New York.

At the same time, though, Trump has said he believes many of the attacks against Kushner are unfair and has lamented that the couple is going through such a turbulent time, according to the two people close to the situation who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly about Trump's private comments.

"I think he's been treated very unfairly," Trump said late last month. "He's a high-quality person."

Kushner's woes mushroomed in the past month, when accusations of spousal abuse emerged against White House staff secretary Rob Porter. Initially, the resulting firestorm — including questions about how Porter had interim clearance for top-secret information despite red flags in his background — threatened to engulf Chief of Staff John Kelly, the retired

Marine hired to bring order to Trump's chaotic West Wing.

Kelly seemed to stabilize his own standing, in part by ordering a reform of the White House security clearance process. And among senior aides, that change fell the hardest on Kushner, who had been working with interim access to top-secret information. And he was doing that as investigators worked through his family's complicated real estate dealings and as special counsel Robert Mueller probes Russian connections to the Trump team.

A week ago, Kushner's security clearance level was downgraded, leaving White House aides to wonder just how many indignities Kushner and Ivanka Trump are willing to suffer. Even if recent events and revelations don't trigger a departure, they have demonstrated that the West Wing clout of "Javanka," as the couple is often referred to, is a far cry from what it once was.

Since taking office last year, Kelly has prioritized creating formal lines of authority and decision-making. Kushner resisted efforts to formalize his role — which early in the administration made him something of a shadow secretary of state — and he has grown frus-

(Continued on page 13)

## IN THE COMMUNITY

(Photos: Leua)



## US aides...

Continued from page 3

Mormon he met online practicing his Spanish. The couple was waiting for her U.S. visa when they were arrested during a police raid on the government-built housing complex where they were living in her apartment. Venezuelan authorities alleged Holt was stockpiling "weapons of war."

U.S. officials have repeatedly demanded Holt's release on humanitarian grounds, considering the charges against him and his wife, Thamar Candelo, to be trumped up and politically motivated. His imprisonment while awaiting trial in a Caracas jail where some of Maduro's chief opponents are being held has further strained relations already marred by U.S. sanctions and almost-daily accusations by Maduro that the U.S. is working with his opponents to topple his socialist administration. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on a recent trip to South America warned that the U.S. may slap crippling oil sanctions on Venezuela and cheered on the prospect of the Venezuelan military overthrowing Maduro.

The visit by Lacava, who traveled to Washington on Sunday after being granted a U.S. visa, has been met with hostility by Sen. Marco Rubio, a Florida Republican who is a harsh critic of Maduro and has President Donald Trump's ear on policy toward Venezuela.

Rubio, in an email sent by his office to fellow Republicans on the Foreign Relations Committee, decried Lacava's visit as an attempt to negotiate Holt's freedom in exchange for sanctions relief or the release of the first lady's two nephews who were convicted last year in a New York federal court for drug trafficking.

The message cites press reports about Lacava's alleged involvement in money laundering and other criminal activity. It also says Rubio has received assurances from the White House and State Department that no one in the Trump administration will meet with Lacava.

"The fact that Rafael Lacava is even coming to the U.S. to negotiate a sanctions-for-hostage deal proves that Holt is being held as leverage," says the email, a copy of which was obtained by AP and whose authenticity was confirmed by Rubio's office. "The very news of high-level meetings would be used by Maduro to sow confusion and doubt in the minds of our regional allies about the commitment of the United States to sanctions."

Lacava could not be reached and has not commented publicly since Rubio criticized him in a tweet Sunday. Venezuela's Communications Ministry declined to comment.

One congressional aide said that Lacava had only requested meetings on Capitol Hill and that the sole purpose of those meetings is to urge the release of Holt and not negotiate anything in exchange. Any discussion of sanctions relief that may be on Lacava's agenda is unlikely to come up, since that is a matter for the administration to decide, the aide added.

McCarry knows Maduro from their time together on the Boston Group, an informal gathering from across the political spectrum — Democrats, Republicans, socialists and capitalists — from both countries that worked discreetly to repair relations between the two countries following a brief coup in 2002 against then-President Hugo Chavez. The U.S. recognized the government that arose briefly from the failed coup.

Maduro and Flores were members of the Venezuelan delegation of lawmakers that traveled to Massachusetts, along with U.S. representatives like then-Sen. John Kerry. McCarry at the time worked for one of the Republican founders of the now-defunct group and over the years has maintained ties to many Venezuelan officials. He also accompanied Sen. Bob Corker, a Tennessee Republican who is chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, on a trip to Caracas in 2015.



Prosecutors...

Continued from page 5

yers argued.

Prosecutors made their case on Monday for allowing the women, including model Janice Dickinson, to testify. It was the first day of what is scheduled to be a two-day pretrial hearing.

Allowing the women to take the stand would show jurors that Cosby “systematically engaged in a signature pattern of providing an intoxicant to his young female victim and then sexually assaulting her when she became incapacitated,” Assistant District Attorney Adrienne D. Jappe argued.

Judge Steven O’Neill said he would not rule on whether to allow the testimony by the end of the hearing, calling it an “extraordinarily weighty issue” that he needs time to review.

O’Neill allowed just one other accuser to take the stand at Cosby’s first trial last year, barring any mention of about 60 others who have come forward to accuse Cosby in recent years.

The only other hint that jurors got of Cosby’s past came

from deposition excerpts from 2005 and 2006 in which the star admitted giving quaaludes to women he wanted to have sex with.

That jury deadlocked, setting the stage for the retrial.

Cosby has pleaded not guilty to charges he assaulted Constand, a Temple University women’s basketball administrator, while he was a powerful alumnus and trustee. He has said the encounter was consensual. He remains free on bail.

Cosby’s revamped defense team, led by former Michael Jackson lawyer Tom Mesereau, argued Monday that telephone records, travel itineraries and other evidence show the alleged assault could not have happened in January 2004, when Constand says it did, and thus falls outside the statute of limitations.

The date is important because Cosby was not arrested until Dec. 30, 2015 — meaning any assault prior to Dec. 30, 2003, would have fallen outside the 12-year statute of limitations.



Bill Cosby, center, departs a pretrial hearing in his sexual assault case at the Montgomery County Courthouse, Monday, March 5, 2018, in Norristown, Pa. Cosby made his first court appearance of the #MeToo era on Monday as defense lawyers tried without success to get his sexual assault case thrown out, then turned their attention to blocking some of the 80-year-old comedian’s dozens of accusers from testifying at his looming retrial.

(AP Photo/Matt Slocum)

O’Neill said he would leave that for the jury to decide, rejecting a defense motion to dismiss the charges.

Jury selection is slated to begin March 29.

Even before the hearing started, the judge knocked Cosby’s lawyers for falsely accusing prosecutors of hiding or destroying evidence.

O’Neill rejected a prosecution request to throw the lawyers off the case, saying he was reluctant to break up the defense with a retrial weeks away. But he added the defense lawyers were essentially “on notice.”

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they grant permission, which Constand and Dickinson have done.

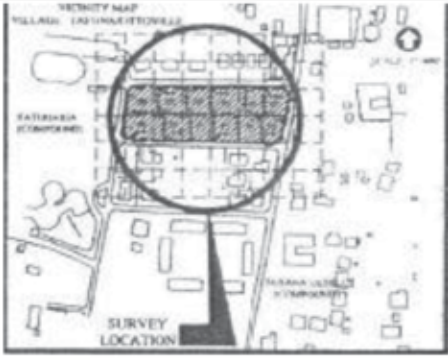
Push is on to restore power with a 2nd storm on the way

BOSTON (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses from Virginia to New England remained without power Monday, several days after a major nor’easter struck the East Coast, and with another storm bearing down.

Residents faced a massive cleanup Monday following the storm, which was blamed for nine deaths, including two children struck by trees. The storm downed trees and power lines, flooded coastal towns and forced schools to cancel classes.

Utility crews worked around the clock to restore power to the roughly 440,000 customers still without electricity Monday afternoon. At the height of the storm, more than 2 million homes and businesses were without electricity.

(Continued on page 15)



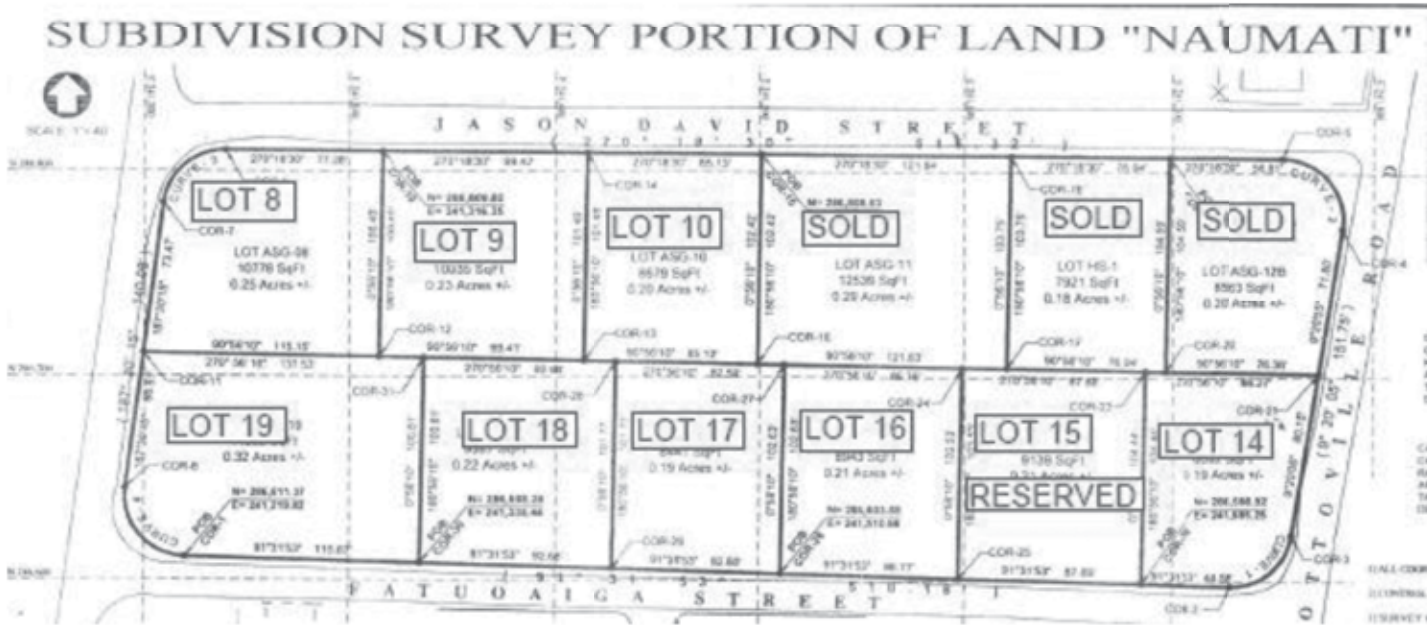
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► Role...

Continued from page 11



In this photo taken Friday, March 17, 2017, Ivanka Trump, the daughter of President Donald Trump, and her husband Jared Kushner, senior adviser to President Donald Trump, attend a joint news conference with the president and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in the East Room of the White House in Washington. Jared Kushner is increasingly a headache for Trump on multiple fronts — security clearance problem, business entanglements — but also one of the last remaining members of the president’s inner circle.

(AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

trated with the chief of staff’s attempts to restrict the couple’s access to the president.

The couple perceives Kelly’s crackdown on security clearances as a direct shot at them, according to White House aides and outside advisers. But one White House official disputed that account, suggesting that Kushner welcomed Kelly’s efforts to organize the West Wing, allowing him to more singularly focus on his portfolio.

Kelly, in turn, has been angered by what he views as the couple’s freelancing. He blames them for changing Trump’s mind at the last minute and questions what exactly they do all day, according to one White House official and an outside ally. Kushner prevailed in previous power struggles within the White House, including one against former chief strategist Steve Bannon, but allies of the president on the outside openly cheered the power couple’s weakened position.

“Only a son-in-law could withstand this sort of exposure and not be fired,” said Jennifer Palmieri, former communications director for President Barack Obama. “Kushner’s vulnerable and in an accelerated fall from grace. Even though his departure would leave Trump even more isolated, a decision could be made that it’s just not worth it for him to stay.”

Those close to the couple insist the duo has no plans to leave Washington. But a soft landing spot has emerged if they choose to take it.

At a senior staff meeting Wednesday, Kushner spoke about the 2020 campaign at Kelly’s behest, talking up the selection of Brad Parscale to run the campaign, according to an administration official who was not authorized to speak publicly about internal discussions. Kushner has a close relationship with Parscale, whom

he recruited to work on the 2016 campaign.

News of Parscale’s appointment was first reported in the Drudge Report, a favored outlet of Kushner’s, in a move that was seen by some in the West Wing as an attempted reminder of Kushner’s clout just hours before his humbling security clearance downgrade became public.

One veteran of the 2016 campaign suggested that there had always been a tentative plan for Kushner to resume a role on the re-election campaign but not this early in the president’s first term.

In a White House populated with attention-seekers, Kushner has been an ascetic, discreet figure. Almost always standing at the periphery in dark business suits, Kushner is rarely heard in public, his impact felt but not seen. His diplomatic trips abroad have either been shrouded in secrecy or conducted with minimal media coverage.

“I am not a person who has sought the spotlight. First in my business and now in public service, I have worked on achieving goals, and have left it to others to work on media and public perception,” Kushner told congressional investigators in a prepared statement last July.

But it is not immediately obvious what he’s achieved. There has been little progress on Mideast peace and relations with Mexico, another top Kushner priority, remain contentious over Trump’s proposed border wall. Kushner’s much ballyhooed project to reinvent the federal government has gained little traction. And questions persist about his family business’s global hunt for cash just a year before a \$1.2 billion mortgage on a Manhattan skyscraper must be paid off by the company and a partner in the

building.

The Kushner Co. says it is in solid financial shape, but skeptics note that the company has been scrambling to raise funds from investors in nations with which Kushner has had government dealings and questions about potential Kushner conflicts of interest have scuttled some efforts.

Ivanka Trump, meanwhile, promotes the administration’s tax overhaul, including a family-friendly tax credit she championed. She continues to talk with lawmakers about paid family leave and recently led the U.S. delegation to the closing ceremonies at the Winter Olympics in South Korea.

But her role has come with unique challenges and calculations. Trump has portrayed herself as an advocate for women and families within the administration, which at times puts her in an awkward position given the allegations against her father and some of his public comments about women.

Trump recently said in an NBC interview that she believes her father’s denials of sexual misconduct, but argued that questions to her on the topic were “pretty inappropriate” — an answer that prompted eyerolls in some quarters of the West Wing yet again.

Some West Wing observers suggested that the mercurial president, who prizes loyalty and family, could at some point move to re-establish Kushner and Ivanka Trump’s clout. But at Washington’s annual Gridiron Dinner on Saturday, he opted for a laugh line about their situation.

“But before I get started, I wanted to apologize for arriving a little bit late,” Trump said. “You know, we were late tonight because Jared could not get through security.”

# Oscar ratings plunge to a record low

By DAVID BAUDER, AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Television viewers could barely stifle a yawn for Hollywood’s biggest night, with the Academy Awards plunging to a record-low viewership of 26.5 million people.

The Nielsen company said that’s a 20 percent drop from the 33 million who watched the 2017 show, which was also hosted by Jimmy Kimmel. Oscar viewership is often tied to the box office muscle of the big nominees, and best picture winner “The Shape of Water” only grossed \$57.4 million in the United States.

It’s the first time the Oscars have drawn fewer than 30 million people, in Nielsen records that go back to 1974. The Academy Awards are often the most-watched television program of the year after the Super Bowl, but this year’s Winter Olympics opening ceremony from Pyeongchang reached 27.8 million.

The previous low-water mark for the Oscars came in 2008, when “No Country For Old Men” won best picture.

Only four years ago the Oscar reached nearly 44 million viewers. The biggest Academy Awards audience on record came in 1998, when the blockbuster “Titanic” was named best picture.

The Academy Awards can keep bragging rights over other awards shows. The Golden Globes reached 19 million viewers in January and the Grammys had an audience of 19.8 million, Nielsen said.



Jimmy Kimmel, left, congratulates Guillermo del Toro in the audience after winning the award for best picture for “The Shape of Water” at the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

(Photo by Chris Pizzello/Invision/AP)

## FOR SALE EXECUTIVE HOUSE AND 0.229 ACRES OF LAND

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Approximately ¼ of a mile up the road towards Aoloau and then follow the signs to the house.

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This house is offered for sale “as is”. For questions or an appointment to view the house and property email: [contact@mwsrose.com](mailto:contact@mwsrose.com) or call 699-2100.



# Should schools be required to tell parents about bullying?



*This photo provided by Richard Taras shows Jacobe Taras during a family spring break vacation in Florida several days before he committed suicide over school bullying back home in Moreau, N.Y. Jacob's parents are lobbying for a state law that would require schools to notify parents when their child is being bullied. It's called "Jacob's Law."*

(Richard Taras via AP)

By MARY ESCH, Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Richard and Christine Taras knew their soft-spoken son had been picked on by a school bus bully. But they were unaware of the more extensive torment Jacobe endured in school hallways until the day the 12-year-old middle schooler killed himself with his father's shotgun.

"Dear Mom and Dad, I'm sorry but I can not live any more," Jacobe wrote on a sheet of lined notebook paper in 2015. "I just can't deal with all the bullies, being called gay ... being told to go kill myself. I'm also done with being pushed, punched, tripped." He signed off, "I LOVE YOU."

"We had no idea of the extent or the seriousness of what was going on," Richard Taras said. "My son didn't tell me and the

school didn't pass along the information they had."

Nearly three years later, Richard and Christine Taras of Moreau, 40 miles north of Albany, are pushing for a New York law that would require schools to notify parents if their child is being bullied. Known as "Jacob's Law," the measure unanimously passed the state Senate last week but has an uncertain fate in the Assembly.

At least eight states currently have laws requiring that schools notify parents when their child is being bullied or is bullying other kids. But such policies have come under attack from LGBT advocates who argue that schools officials could inadvertently be put in the position of outing gay, lesbian or transgender pupils to their parents. And such students may avoid reporting bullying to officials

for fear of having their parents told.

"While it's important for parents to be aware if their children are being bullied in school, it's also imperative to remember that LGBTQ students may not be out to their family or may not have supportive families," said Ikaika Regidor, director of education and youth programs for GLSEN, a national organization focused on safe schools for LGBTQ students.

Civil rights groups say it is a violation of students' privacy rights when authorities disclose their sexual orientation to their parents. In 2001, a successful wrongful death lawsuit was filed after a Pennsylvania high school football player committed suicide when police officers threatened to tell his family he was gay. A federal court in Philadelphia ruled that the U.S. Constitution prohibits governments from delving into the sexual orientation of Americans.

Those concerns have at least one state rethinking its law.

In New Jersey, known for having some of the strictest anti-bullying statutes in the nation, state education department officials have suggested stepping back from automatic notification and instead requiring schools to consider incidents on a case-by-case basis before contacting parents.

"There are laws that restrict what school officials can tell a parent about anything the official has discovered about the student's sexual orientation or gender identification," said Bob Farrace, spokesman for the National Association of Secondary School Principals. "Where notification might lead into that conversation puts the official into a very difficult spot. We just need to make sure laws are reconciled."

The Education Commission of the States says many states require that school districts develop policies around parental notification of bullying, but only a few explicitly outline those requirements at the state level.

Connecticut, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Virginia and Wisconsin have statewide requirements for parental notification of bullying, although timing of notification varies. In Louisiana, a parent must be notified before any student under 18 is interviewed about a report of bullying. In Connecticut, parents must be notified within 48 hours after an investigation of bullying is completed.

Other states require schools to develop local policies on parental notification. They include Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and West Virginia.



## American Samoa Government DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Request for Public Comment on Special Education Funding Application

The American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE) Special Education Division (SPED) has for public review its application for funding under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) with the US Department of Education.

These funds are used to provide special education services to all school age children, ages 3 - 21 years, in the territory of American Samoa who have a disability that adversely affects their classroom achievements. As a condition for granting the funds, each State or Territory proposing the application must submit the application for public review and comment. The public must be afforded reasonable opportunities for comment 30 days prior to the submission of the application on May 14, 2018. The public hearing is scheduled for April 12, 2018 at the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Conference Room in Utulei at 2:00pm. The Department of Education must review and give due consideration to all comments and suggestions prior to the submission of the application for funding.

Copies of the application are available at the Special Education Office located in Faga'alu. All persons interested in the application are encouraged to pick up a copy between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm. Written comments will also be taken during these hours. Comments and suggestions may also be made via email to Faaufono Vaitautolu at faauitulu@yahoo.com or Dr. Teresa Le'iato Atuatasi at atuajjj\_1999@yahoo.com or may be sent surface mail to Dr. Teresa Le'iato Atuatasi, Assistant Director Special Education Division, PO Box ASDOE-SPED, Pago Pago, AS 96799.

### Talosagaina Finagalo Lautele mo le Tusi Talosaga mo Alagatupe Fuafuaina o le Ofisa o A'oga Fa'apitoa

Ua tu'uina mai e le Matagaluega o A'oga Amerika Samoa (ASDOE) Ofisa o A'oga Fa'apitoa (SPED) se avanoa e fa'alia ai finagalo fa'alaua'itele a le mamalu o le atunu'u mo le alagatupe talosaga i lalo o le Maga B Tulafono mo Tagata o iai Manaoga Fa'apitoa (IDEA) ofisa o A'oga Fa'apitoa (OSEP) o le Matagaluega o A'oga a le Malo Tele o Amerika (USDOE).

O ia alagatupe ua fuafuaina e fa'atino ai a'oa'oga fa'apitoa tu'uina atu mo tamaiti a'oga uma, e amata mai i le 3 - 21 tausaga, i totonu o le Teritori o Amerika Samoa o lo'o iai manaoga fa'apitoa ua fa'afaigata ai taumafaiga taua'oa'oga i totonu o potu a'oga. O se tasi aiaiga mo le taliaina o le talosaga, e tatau i Setete ma Teritori uma o lo'o talosagaina ia alagatupe ona fa'asalalau a latou tusi talosaga mo se finagalo fa'aalia o tagata lautele. E tatau ona lava se avanoa e silasila lelei ai le atunu'u mo le silafia ma tu'uina mai so latou finagalo fa'aalia e tusa e 30 aso ae le'i tu'uina atu le tusi talosaga ia Me 14, 2018. O le a faia se fono fa'alaua'itele ia Aperila 12, 2018 i le potu fonotaga i le Ofisa ASDOE Early Childhood Education i Utulei i le itula e 2:00pm. O le a iloiloina e le Matagaluega a A'oga Amerika Samoa finagalo ma manatu fa'aalia a le lautele ma tu'uina atu ni fautuaga ae le'i o'o i le aso fa'atapula'aina o tusi talosaga.

O lo'o maua kopi o lenei tusi talosaga i le Ofisa o A'oga Fa'apitoa i Faga'alu. Mo i latou e mana'omia se kopi o le tusi talosaga, e avanoa le ofisa mai le itula 8:00am i le 4:00pm. O manatu fa'aalia e tauala mai i tusitusiga e mafai ona tu'uina mai i taimi ua fa'atulagaina. A iai nisi manatu ma fautuaga, e mafai ona imeli mai ia Faaufono Vaitautolu faauitulu@yahoo.com po'o Teresa Le'iato Atuatasi atuajjj\_1999@yahoo.com pe tusi mai ia Teresa Le'iato Atuatasi, SPED Assistant Director, PO Box ASDOE-SPED, Pago





Wang Qishan, China's former anti-corruption czar and official who is regarded as Chinese President Xi Jinping's right-hand man walks past the president as they arrive for the opening session of the annual National People's Congress in Beijing's Great Hall of the People, Monday, March 5, 2018. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan)



An electrical worker for INTREN, a electric company from Chicago that drove two days to get to Philadelphia to help PECO restore power, walks by a damaged vehicle on in Bryn Mawr, Pa., on Sunday, March 4 2018, that was crushed by a falling tree on Friday. The driver was able to climb out the window and received several stitches for his injuries. (Michael Bryant/The Philadelphia Inquirer via AP)

## ► Push is on...

Continued from page 12

Some coastal communities in Massachusetts were bringing in heavy equipment to clear sand, rocks, trees and other debris blocking waterfront neighborhoods.

Fierce winds and high tides damaged dozens of homes in Scituate, where on Monday water still filled yards and rocks blocked streets. Quincy is sending trash trucks through the hard-hit neighborhoods all week to pick up trash.

Even as the cleanup is underway, another storm is headed to the region Wednesday, albeit a much different beast.

“There’s going to be a lot more snow over a wider area,” said National Weather Service meteorologist Lenore Correia, in Taunton, Massachusetts.

The forecast is for 8 to 12 inches of snow west of Boston and south into Rhode Island and Connecticut, she said.

The good news is that the winds won’t be as strong and there is less risk of coastal flooding.

The Mid-Atlantic states will likely see some precipitation starting late Tuesday and continuing through Thursday. A winter storm watch has been issued for northern New Jersey and parts of Pennsylvania.

The nor’easter pounded the Eastern Seaboard with a combination of gusting winds, rain and

snow, and coastal communities were left to deal with damaging high tide flooding as powerful waves and churning surf pounded shorelines and beachfront homes.

Dozens of Massachusetts schools remained closed Monday, most in coastal areas south of Boston, the region which bore the brunt of the storm. It could be midnight Tuesday before everyone is back online.

In Pennsylvania, more than 100,000 were waiting for power to be restored as hundreds of crews worked to clear trees and repair power lines. Officials said some customers may not have service restored until at least Tuesday. At the peak of the storm, roughly 587,000 customers were without power. Some schools were closed, while others were delaying their opening.

Nearly 50,000 people in the Washington area were without power Monday, and some might not have service restored for a few more days. The vice president of technical solutions at Dominion Power, Kevin Curtis, told WTOP-FM that last week’s storm was a “top five event” as far as the number of customers affected, which totaled almost 70,000 homes and businesses. He said about 25 percent of the company’s system was affected by the storm.

# China pledges strong growth as Xi bids to rule indefinitely

By **JOE McDONALD and GILLIAN WONG**, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China’s government pledged Monday to deliver robust growth, pursue advanced technology and boost military spending while urging the public to embrace President Xi Jinping’s rule as its ceremonial legislature prepared for changes to allow Xi to stay in power indefinitely. The plan to end constitutional limits on Xi’s term as president has overshadowed the meeting of the National People’s Congress, which usually is used to showcase economic initiatives and plans for social programs and other government work.

In a nearly two-hour speech to the legislature, Premier Li Keqiang did not mention the scrapping of term limits but emphasized the primacy of Xi and the ruling Communist Party he leads in all aspects of Chinese life. “Resolutely safeguard General Secretary Xi Jinping’s core status and the authority of the party’s central committee and its centralized and unified leadership,” Li said in a speech to nearly 3,000 delegates to the ceremonial legislature in the Great Hall of the People. The slide toward one-man rule under Xi, already China’s most dominant figure of recent decades, has fueled concern that Beijing is eroding efforts to guard against the excesses of autocratic leadership and make economic regulation more stable and predictable. The president’s office has few powers, but Xi’s posts as ruling party general secretary and chairman of the commission that controls the party’s military wing, the People’s Liberation Army, already have no term limit. By tradition since the early 1990s, one person has held all three posts at the same time. “If it gets approved, you can describe his attempt to abolish term limits as really to make China medieval again, not to make China great again,” said Warren Sun, a historian of the Chinese Communist Party at Australia’s Monash University.

The 64-year-old Xi has appointed himself to head bodies that oversee national security, finance, economic reform and other functions, effectively sidelining Li, the party’s No. 2 figure.

Chinese officials have defended the end of Xi’s term limits as necessary to ensure continuity as Beijing undertakes a sprawling long-range agenda aimed at making state industry competitive and productive, developing profitable high-tech industry, reducing poverty and cleaning up China’s battered environment.

## NOTICE FOR SEPARATION AGREEMENT

TO Members of the LEATUTUFU/NIU Family and to all whom these present may come!

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that IAKOPO IEROME of TULA has offered for recording in this office an instrument in writing which seeks to separate a certain structure which is or to be erected, on land SIUFANUA allegedly belonging to LEATUTUFU/NIU FAMILY of the village of TULA. Said land SIUFANUA is situated in or near the village of TULA in the County of VAIFANUA, Island of TUTUILA, American Samoa.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that any interested person may object to the recording of such instrument by filing in the Territorial Registrar's Office in Fagatogo, a written objection to the recording of said instrument. Any objections thereto must be filed with in 30 days from the date of posting of this notice.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that if no such objections are filed within the said 30 day period, the instrument will be recorded and shall be valid and binding on all persons. The said instrument may be examined at any time at the Territorial Registrar's Office.

POSTED: FEBRUARY 26, 2018 thru MARCH 28, 2018

SIGNED: Taito S.B. White, Territorial Registrar

### FA'AALIGA O LE FEAGAIGA MO SE TU'U'ESEINA

I tagata o le aiga sa LEATUTUFU/NIU, ma i latou uma e silasila ma lauiloaina lenei fa'aaliga!

O le fa'aaliga lenei ona o IAKOPO IEROME o le nu'u o TULA ua ia fa'aulufaleina mai i lenei ofisa se feagaiga tusitusi e fa'ailoa ai se mana'oga fia tu'u'eseina o se fale ua/po o le a, fa'atuina i luga o le fanua o SIUFANUA e fa'asino i le aiga sa LEATUTUFU/NIU, o le nu'u o TULA. O lenei fanua e totonu pe latalata ane i le nu'u o TULA, itumalo o VAIFANUA, ile motu o TUTUILA, Amerika Samoa.

O le fa'aaliga fo'i e fa'apea, so o se tasi e iai sona aia i lenei mata'upu e mafai ona fa'atu'i'iese ile fa'amauina o lenei feagaiga pe a auina mai i le ofisa ole Resitara o le Teritori of Amerika Samoa i Fagatogo, sana fa'atu'ese tusitusia. O fa'atu'iesega uma lava e ao ona fa'aulufaleina mai i totonu o aso e 30 faita'ina mai i le aso na fa'ailoa ai lenei fa'aaliga.

Afai ole a leai se fa'atu'iesega e fa'aulufaleina i totonu o aso 30 e pei ona ta'ua i luga, o le a fa'amauina loa lenei feagaiga e taualoaina ma 'aafia ai tagata uma.

03/06 & 03/20/18

## LAND COMMISSION

NOTICE is hereby given that MATAUTU PETER TINITALI, FILIPOU S. SUA & AUFAT FILIPO PETELO ON BEHALF OF SOA FAMILY of VAITOGI, American Samoa, has executed a LEASE AGREEMENT to a certain parcel of land commonly known as MATAUTU which is situated in the village of VAITOGI, in the County of TUALAUTA, WESTERN District, Island of Tutuila, American Samoa. Said LEASE AGREEMENT is now on file with the Territorial Registrar to be forwarded to the Governor respecting his approval or disapproval thereof according to the laws of American Samoa. Said instrument names ALICE ASALELE & FAAMAO OBRIEN ASALELE JR. as LESSEES.

Any person who wish, may file his objection in writing with the Secretary of the Land Commission before the 30TH day of APRIL, 2018. It should be noted that any objection must clearly state the grounds therefor.

POSTED: MARCH 1, 2018 thru APRIL 30, 2018

SIGNED: Taito S.B. White, Territorial Registrar

### KOMISI O LAU'ELE'ELE

O O LE FAASALALAUAGA lenei ua faia ona o MATAUTU PETER TINITALI, FILIPOU S. SUA & AUFAT FILIPO PETELO, SUI O LE AIGA SOA ole nu'u o VAITOGI, Amerika Samoa, ua ia faia se FEAGAIGA LISI, i se fanua ua lauiloa o MATAUTU, e i le nu'u o VAITOGI i le itumalo o TUALAUTA, Falelima i SISIFO ole Motu o TUTUILA Amerika Samoa. O lea FEAGAIGA LISI ua i ai nei i teuga pepa ale Resitara o Amerika Samoa e fia auina atu ile Kovana Sili mo sana fa'amaoniga e tusa ai ma le Tulafono a Amerika Samoa. O lea mata'upu o lo'o ta'ua ai ALICE ASALELE & FAAMAO OBRIEN ASALELE JR..

A iai se tasi e fia fa'atu'iese i lea mata'upu, ia fa'aulufaleina mai sa na fa'atu'iesega tusitusia ile Failautusi o lea Komisi ae le'i oo ile aso 30 o APERILA, 2018. Ia manatua, o fa'atu'iesega uma lava ia tusitusia manino mai ala uma e fa'atu'iese ai.

03/06 & 04/06/18



# Trump dangles Israel trip for new embassy; mum on peace plan



By **MATTHEW LEE**, AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Under twin clouds of legal investigation, President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu presented a united front on Monday, Trump announcing he might travel to Jerusalem to preside over the opening of the new U.S. Embassy Netanyahu had wanted, and the Israeli lavishing praise on the American leader.

In a show of strong support for Netanyahu, who faces corruption allegations at home, Trump dangled the possibility of his second visit to Israel as president. However, he said nothing about whether he would use the trip to unveil his much-vaunted but still mysterious peace plan for Israel and the Palestinians.

The president said his controversial decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to the holy city had improved chances for ending the conflict, despite Palestinians' insistence otherwise. The two steps enraged the Palestinians, who claim part of Jerusalem for the capital of an eventual state and accuse Trump of abandoning the U.S. role of honest broker.

Trump and his wife, Melania, welcomed Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, to the White House just hours after Israeli police announced that a third confidant of the prime minister had agreed to turn state's witness in the burgeoning corruption case. Netanyahu and his wife were questioned separately by police for hours on Friday before their departure for Washington.

Monday's meeting also came amid the continuing U.S. investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential campaign, a probe that may have implications for the president's Mideast peace point man, son-in-law Jared Kushner, who recently lost his top secret security clearance. And, it took place as profound turmoil in the Middle East threatens hopes of a resumption in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and attempts to restore stability in the volatile region more broadly.

Trump said his Mideast team, led by Kushner, was hard at work on a peace proposal that is nearing completion, but he offered no details on the plan that the Palestinians say will be dead on arrival and not worth discussing. He said that despite their anger, "the Palestinians, I think, are wanting to come back to the table." There was no apparent evidence for the assertion.

But, Trump said he had actually given peace a chance by removing Jerusalem as an obstacle in long-stalled negotiations that have collapsed under successive U.S. administrations of both political parties. "Nobody could get past, No. 1 Jerusalem," he said. "We've taken it off the table. So this gives us a real opportunity for peace."

Trump said he was looking into the possibility of traveling to Jerusalem in mid-May, when the embassy is slated to move into a temporary location that is now an annex of the U.S. consulate. "We're looking at coming," he said. "If I can, I will."

With Netanyahu looking on, Trump said he had rejected a \$1 billion plan for a new embassy in favor of the temporary facility, which would cost only \$250,000. Eventually, however, that embassy would have to be expanded to accommodate more than a handful of diplomats.





# 2018-2019


## McDonald's Scholarship

McDonald's American Samoa's \$36,000 Scholarship is a merit-based scholarship awarded to 4 High School Seniors continuing to ASCC and 1 Graduating ASCC student to continue to an accredited U.S University.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- High School Seniors planning to attend ASCC
- ASCC Graduates (Fall 2017/Spring 2018)
- Cumulative GPA of at-least 3.50
- SAT Score 1,000 or better (High School)
- US Citizen/Nationals or AS Permanent Resident

### HOW TO APPLY?

- Pick up/Download an application package
- Facebook Page: McdonaldsAmSam 
- Pick up at McDonald's Main Office in Nuuli  
Monday to Friday (8am to 4pm)

**Call us at 699-8686 or 8699 for more information.**

**DUE: April 27th at 4pm!**

